



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
13 November 2000

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 29th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 27 October 2000, at 5 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Niculescu (Romania)
later: Ms. Barrington (Vice-Chairman) (Ireland)

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00-71367 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Agenda item 102: Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/55/222)

1. **Mr. Rahman** (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the state of preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed Countries (A/55/222).
2. **Mr. Kumamaru** (Japan), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, said that the Bureau of that Committee shared the concern expressed in various forums about the increasing marginalization of least developed countries from the full benefit of the phenomenal growth in the world economy over the previous two decades. The international community must work together with those countries to reverse that trend. The Third Conference must therefore come up with concrete and tangible outcomes aimed at accelerating growth, eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development in least developed countries.
3. At its first session, the Committee had agreed to recommend to the Conference a draft provisional agenda and provisional rules of procedure of the Conference. It had further agreed, that the Conference secretariat would prepare a draft annotated outline of the new programme of action (A/55/222, para. 11). The Trade and Development Board had considered the outline and had recommended that, in preparing the new programme of action, account should be taken, *inter alia*, of other ongoing processes within multilateral organizations.
4. The final consideration of the draft programme of action would be undertaken at the Committee's second session, which would be held in the first week of April 2001. He believed that, among other things, the programme of action should continue to be developed within the Preparatory Committee and that the Committee should work together with the civil society actors who would participate in the other parallel events to develop the contribution that they could make to the process. He appealed for active and effective participation by all stakeholders at the national level in support of the Conference process.
5. **Mr. Levitte** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, said that the least developed countries should remain at the heart of Europe's priorities. The European Union attached the greatest importance to ensuring that the main goal of the Conference was the eradication of poverty from and attainment of sustainable development in the least developed countries. It was essential that the Conference should be based on a global approach to development, that reflected not only basic economic aspects but also the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. That approach should be based on existing processes including the poverty reduction strategy process and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Such a global approach, which would take into account the wide range of situations in different countries, should use strategies that contributed to the goals of consolidating peace and preventing conflicts, strengthening democracy and reducing inequalities, in particular between men and women. The Conference must take a detailed look at the basic needs of least developed countries, many of them still faced a wide range of impediments to achieving sustainable growth. Moreover, since their development efforts were often hampered by a lack of internal and external stability, due in particular to armed conflicts, the development strategies to be defined should focus on strengthening those countries' institutional capacities, particularly strengthening civil society and participatory decision-making processes and creating an environment favourable to development.
6. The programme of action to be adopted at the end of the Conference should include measurable, applicable and operational measures and should be adapted to the wide range of situations encountered in the least developed countries. The latter must be closely involved in the entire preparatory process and in the Conference itself. The European Union was pleased that civil society, business communities and decentralized authorities had been invited to take part in the general discussions.
7. **Mr. Ibrahim** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group of 77 saw the forthcoming third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries as a challenge to the

international community to review the implementation of international support measures, particularly in the areas of debt, official development assistance, trade and investment and the integration of those economies into the global economy. Given that the 48 least developed countries had 10 per cent of the world population but accounted for only 0.4 per cent of global imports and, 0.6 per cent of global exports, the issue assumed a moral dimension.

8. It was of deep concern to the Group of 77 that, in a world shaped by globalization and new technologies, the least developed countries had continued to be marginalized from the global economy and the international trading system, and were receiving little by way of foreign direct investment and official development assistance.

9. In recognition of those conditions, at the recent South Summit, in Havana, the Group had sought a new spirit of international cooperation based on common but differentiated responsibilities between the developing and industrialized countries, and had called for outright cancellation of debt, particularly for the least developed countries. The forthcoming Conference would provide a unique opportunity to the international community to take concrete and comprehensive decisions, including a new programme of action for the new millennium. Furthermore, measures from the Programme of Action for the 1990s should be revisited, including achievement of targets for official development assistance.

10. Full participation of the developing countries in the remaining preparatory meetings and the Conference itself must be ensured; that would call for measures to facilitate financing for representatives of those countries to attend those meetings. The institutional mechanism for follow-up and implementation of the new programmes of action should also be strengthened.

11. At the dawn of the new millennium, no part of humanity should be left wallowing in poverty. The Conference provided the opportunity to renew the commitment to the least developed countries, and he looked forward to concrete action by the Committee to reach that goal.

Ms. Barrington (Ireland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

12. **Mr. Kolby (Norway)** said that all development actors should be actively involved in the preparations

for and follow-up to the Conference. Preparations at the national level were crucial, as well, and should seek to involve the private sector and civil society.

13. The main focus of the programme of action for the Conference should be poverty eradication, with people at its centre. The draft outline for the programme was promising in that regard. If the new programme of action was to be an efficient policy instrument, it should contain clear targets and tools to measure concrete performance within specific time-frames, both for least developed countries and for donors.

14. The Conference should aim at specific improvements in several areas, including official development assistance and development finance, generating more resources for development, and trade and market access. However, improvements in the international economic environment alone would not automatically generate economic growth and contribute to poverty alleviation. Good governance, appropriate domestic policies and political stability were fundamental factors for promoting economic growth and sustainable development.

15. Norway attached great importance to the preparatory process for the Conference and would do its utmost to make constructive contributions. The Brussels Conference must lead to a stronger partnership between the least developed countries and the international community.

Agenda item 95: Environment and sustainable development (continued)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.17

16. **Mr. Anaedu (Nigeria)**, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced the draft resolution entitled "Report of the sixth special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme", and drew attention to paragraphs 5 and 6.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
8 December 2000
English
Original: French

Second Committee

Summary record of the 30th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 31 October 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Niculescu (Romania)
later: Ms. Barrington (Vice-Chairman) (Ireland)

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Other matters

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00-71835 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 100: Globalization and interdependence
(continued) (A/C.2/55/L.16)

Draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (A/C.2/55/L.16)

1. **Mr. Ducaru** (Romania), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of its co-sponsors, said that four additional countries had joined the co-sponsors, namely, Canada, the Czech Republic, Fiji and Thailand. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, an intergovernmental mechanism created in 1992, was aimed at establishing an economic cooperation network among its 11 founding member States. The network had been transformed in 1999 into a regional organization under the name of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization. The Organization's main objectives were to make the most efficient use of the advantages derived from geographical proximity and from the complementarities of the national economies of its member States and to speed up the economic and social development of those countries that were seeking to become members of the European Union. The granting to the Organization of observer status in the General Assembly of the United Nations by the adoption of Assembly resolution 54/5 had paved the way for the next step in relations with the United Nations, which was the introduction of a draft resolution aimed at defining the cooperation between the two Organizations. The draft before the Committee took note of the Istanbul Summit Declaration adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the member States of the Organization, in Istanbul, in which the Organization expressed the desirability of strengthening its cooperation with the United Nations. He hoped that the General Assembly would adopt by consensus the draft resolution that had been introduced in the Second Committee.

2. **Mr. Holubov** (Ukraine) said that, in addition to its economic function, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization was helping to create a new political climate in the region, thereby contributing to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Under the auspices of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, the countries of the region had embarked upon

development projects mainly in the sectors of energy, transport, communications, the environment, banking, finance, agriculture, suppression of drug trafficking, and science and technology. New models of cooperation had also been developed to respond to technological and natural disasters and to combat international crime. The regional role of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization was already recognized at the international level on account of its cooperation with various international economic and financial organizations. The members of the Organization, convinced that regional cooperation was a key element of the process of integration in Europe, were determined to promote closer cooperation between the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization and the European Union, and other European structures. The granting by the General Assembly of the status of observer at the United Nations had been in recognition of the Organization's international importance. Ukraine attached great importance to the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the framework of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization aimed at the integration of the countries of South-East Europe into the European Economic Area. In that regard, the Ukrainian delegation fully supported the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization and urged Member States to support that important initiative, which should help to bring the countries of the region closer together and to promote peace and stability in the region and in the world.

Agenda item 92: Macroeconomic policy questions
(continued) (A/C.2/55/L.19)

(a) Trade and development (continued)

Draft resolution on the transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours (A/C.2/55/L.19)

3. **Ms. Jarbussynova** (Kazakhstan), introducing the draft resolution, said that Kazakhstan, a landlocked country, attached great importance to cooperation with the United Nations system in the transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours. Because of the process of globalization, the development of economic ties between East and West, and the growing share of the countries of Asia in global output, it was very

important to create transcontinental and subregional transport corridors, particularly for landlocked countries and countries that were remote from maritime ports. The resolutions adopted on the transit environment in the landlocked States in Central Asia and their transit developing neighbours (resolution 51/168 and resolution 53/171) had had a positive influence on the transit environment in the region, by facilitating access by the region to international markets.

4. In order to strengthen cooperation between the States of the region and the United Nations in organizing the system of transit transport in Central Asia, the co-sponsors were submitting a revised text, which they hoped would receive broad support from Member States.

Agenda item 102: Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (continued)
(A/55/222)

5. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) recalled that participants in the first session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee had felt that an additional session would be required to facilitate progress, ensure high-level participation and generate the necessary political will. The major global conferences of the 1990s had generated a wealth of ideas on how to approach the problems of development. The lead agencies of the conferences should make direct inputs to the draft programme of action. The secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should coordinate the participation of those agencies and other stakeholders. The new programme of action should be based on the experiences of the least developed countries and the difficulties they had faced in implementing the Programme of Action which had been adopted in 1990. There should be measurable commitments for both the least developed countries and their development partners. The performance of the least developed countries and of donors should be regularly monitored by the United Nations system. The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries should focus on such key areas as the eradication of poverty, since the concentration of people living in absolute poverty was highest in the least developed countries; the reorientation of aid programmes, given that it had been recognized that the least developed countries would depend on official

development assistance for a large part of their development programmes; the reduction of the debt burden, whose high level and servicing obligations were a drain on the limited earnings of the least developed countries; the increase in foreign direct investment, whose flow was too small to offset the decline in official development assistance; questions concerning duty-free and quota-free market access for products from the least developed countries; and enhanced capacity-building, notably through the elimination of trade barriers and supply-side constraints.

6. **Mr. Aho-Glele** (Benin) said that the situation of the least developed countries would deteriorate if effective measures were not taken urgently, and that the number of countries in that group would increase if the international trading system and international financial architecture were not restructured. The state of preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries bode well for its success. It was nonetheless regrettable that the post of Executive Secretary of the Conference had not yet been filled. It was to be hoped that the next Conference would have a tangible outcome that would make it possible to eliminate the least developed category by the year 2020. The programme of action should define specific and measurable goals and performance indicators in order to gauge the progress achieved and rectify shortcomings. The goals set should lay the structural groundwork to enable the countries concerned to embark on the path of sustainable and self-sufficient development. That would require building the capacities of the least developed countries in the area of new information and communication technologies. Once the programme of action was adopted, the greatest challenge would remain its financing. It would therefore be useful to contemplate new methods of mobilizing resources in order to ensure their availability and predictability. In order to guarantee the success of the programme of action, the Conference should design appropriate structures at the national, regional and international levels, which would be very vital for Africa, where more than two thirds of the least developed countries were situated. It would therefore be desirable if, in Africa, the national committees established for the elaboration of draft national programmes of action became national committees for the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the programme of action. At the regional level, the Economic Commission for Africa should

coordinate the implementation and annual evaluation of the programme of action through its subregional development centres. At the international level, the Secretary-General could establish a United Nations commission whose main responsibility would be implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the programme of action.

7. *Ms. Barrington (Ireland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

8. **Mr. Rahmtalla (Sudan)** said that, like the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee, his delegation was concerned that the least developed countries were increasingly marginalized and deprived of the benefits of globalization. That concern was reflected in the conclusions of the recent UNCTAD report evaluating the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. Those conclusions emphasized the fact that declining official development assistance had had an adverse impact on the economic and social situation of the least developed countries, that an infusion of capital was essential to poverty reduction and to guaranteeing sustainable development, that the use of official development assistance to relieve external debt did not help to resolve the problem since the least developed countries put that assistance towards servicing their debts, and that the countries concerned should adopt effective domestic policies within the framework of a clear strategy, with a view to the prudent use of financial resources.

9. In the light of those conclusions, the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries should generate recommendations and resolutions with a view to enhancing the productive capacities and competitiveness of the least developed countries. At the same time, it would be important to increase capital flows and official development assistance, cancel the debt of the least developed countries and facilitate their access to international markets. As for the draft annotated outline of the new programme of action, his delegation wished to stress that it should be based on realistic and measurable priorities, and not merely reiterate the previous two Programmes of Action. It should also reflect the priorities set out in the regional programmes of action for the least developed countries.

10. His delegation also supported the proposal recently put forward by the Ministers for Foreign

Affairs of the least developed countries regarding the convening of an additional session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. It hoped that that proposal would be adopted by the Second and Fifth Committees and that the necessary resources would be made available for that purpose.

11. **Mr. Kebede (Ethiopia)** said that the challenges facing the least developed countries were complex and their solution required a multidimensional approach encompassing increased development aid, outright debt cancellation, enhanced productive capacity and improved market access for their products, as well as the creation of a supportive environment at both the national and international levels. Apart from their weak economic and institutional structures, the least developed countries were often victims of natural disasters and were confronted by an unfavourable external economic environment. Moreover, international cooperation and solidarity in support of those countries fell short of expectations; heightening their vulnerability. Although the least developed countries had launched comprehensive economic and social reform programmes, their socio-economic decline had continued and the gap between the level of their financial resources and their ever-increasing needs was widening. The continued marginalization of the least developed countries from an increasingly globalizing economy and their deprivation in the midst of global prosperity were clear evidence of the collective failure to improve their situation. The previous two Conferences on the least developed countries and their Programmes of Action had failed to improve the situation. Owing to the failure of those two Programmes of Action, the number of countries in the group of least developed countries had increased: there were now 48, compared to 25 in the 1980s, and that trend could well continue unless concrete measures were taken. While traditional development problems in the least developed countries remained unresolved, new challenges were emerging to exacerbate them. Concrete actions and shared partnership were urgently needed in order to improve the situation of those countries.

12. The current report on the least developed countries contained analyses and recommendations that were worth highlighting. First, official development assistance was the only dependable source of financing growth in those countries and it had continued to decline. That decline had contributed to

macroeconomic instability and the poor economic performance in the least developed countries. The report stressed that additional aid was a precondition for economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development in those countries. Secondly, regarding debt, debt relief initiatives were too late and too slow and, in any case, the assistance they brought was too small. Debt relief could not be a substitute for official development assistance. Thirdly, the international aid delivery system must be changed in order to improve coordination of the actions of donors, international financial institutions and official aid agencies, and to involve the recipient countries. Fourthly, local ownership was necessary for the implementation of appropriate development policies. That would require not only the preparation of strategies but also effective control over the allocation of funds within a coherent and integrated budgetary process.

13. Based on past experience, the least developed countries called upon their development partners to provide substantial and unconditional development aid, commensurate with their development needs, and to take broad debt cancellation initiatives without delay. Priority should be given to the implementation of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative. The debt-servicing capacity of the least developed countries was continually declining and debt servicing absorbed a substantial proportion of their development aid. Investment in physical and human infrastructure must be enhanced with a view to strengthening the productive capacities of the least developed countries. In that connection, he called for the rapid implementation of the Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance, on which no action had been taken as yet for lack of adequate resources. Improved market access for the export products of the least developed countries was also necessary. In that connection, he welcomed the measures taken by the European Union; also praiseworthy was the initiative taken by the United States of America (African Growth and Opportunity Act). Actions must be taken to ensure the full integration of the least developed countries into the global trading system through, inter alia, the special differential measures provided for in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

14. As for the preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

and the content of the programme of action, his delegation believed that the programme of action should be different from the previous Programmes and have a mechanism for tackling all development challenges facing the least developed countries, both old and emerging. It should set measurable and implementable goals and indicate the means of achieving them and, in addition, specify the role of government in the least developed countries. Furthermore, coherence between national and international programmes must be maintained, and the international community must ensure coherence between the poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) to be prepared by the Bretton Woods institutions and the programme of action. Although the implementation of the programme of action was the responsibility of all stakeholders, the least developed countries should have sole ownership of programme preparation and priority-setting. The Conference in 2001 should designate a strong intergovernmental body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the programme of action.

15. The least developed countries, for their part, were determined to pursue economic and political reform programmes taking into account their specific circumstances. The success of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries depended not only on additional development finance, but also on resolutely breaking the vicious circle of poverty and quickly integrating the least developed countries into the increasingly globalized world economy.

16. **Mr. Babar** (Pakistan) noted that the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries had clearly established that the progress made had been far from satisfactory; in certain cases, the situation of the least developed countries had worsened and the number of countries belonging to that group was larger than it had been in the previous decade. The development programmes and policies adopted by the least developed countries had been rendered ineffective owing to the challenges posed by globalization and the liberalization of trade, a continuing decline in flows of official development assistance (ODA) and a high level of external debt.

17. The Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries must, on the basis of lessons learned from previous programmes, suggest

concrete measures in accordance with a fixed timetable, in order to achieve positive results. The participants should focus on four principal areas of concern: first, levels of ODA for human resource development, capacity-building and other projects permitting the least developed countries to become integrated into the global economy must be raised. Second, durable solutions must be found to the problem of the external debt of those countries. Third, market access for the export products of the least developed countries must be improved, a measure which should be accompanied by the enhancement of their production capacity and competitiveness; there was thus a need for technical assistance to enable them to participate in multilateral trade negotiations. Fourth, an enabling international economic environment must be created which would support the domestic policies adopted by the least developed countries, especially in view of the fact that such countries were especially vulnerable to shocks emanating from the forces of globalization, and were therefore in serious danger of being marginalized. If the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries was to succeed in assisting the development efforts of such countries, the international community must muster the political will to achieve those goals.

18. The world leaders who had participated in the Millennium Summit had undertaken to address the special needs of the least developed countries and to take specific measures in that regard. For their part, the least developed countries would do their utmost. Every effort should be made to demonstrate that the objectives contained in United Nations documents could be achieved through determined collective action.

19. Mr. Chave (Observer for Switzerland) said that his country increasingly supported the preparatory process for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, that the number of least developed countries had grown from 25 to 48 since 1971, and that the marginalization of such countries was steadily worsening. Consequently, the participation of the least developed countries in global trade had declined by 40 per cent between 1990 and 1997, and now represented only about 0.5 per cent thereof.

20. Through bilateral development cooperation, Switzerland accorded particular support to policies and activities aimed at reducing poverty in the least developed countries. It therefore wished to take an

active part in the formulation of a new programme of action for the least developed countries, which would include commitments aimed at reducing poverty in, and the marginalization of, such countries. It hoped that such commitments would be implemented effectively within the framework of an appropriate, flexible monitoring process which would, where necessary, allow for the reorientation of activities in the light of experience.

21. The draft of the new programme of action for the least developed countries raised some interesting points. The least developed countries, which were the countries most concerned with the outcome, should make a fundamental contribution to its formulation. Ideally, they should be able to submit their national programmes of action to the preparatory committee or to the Secretariat as quickly as possible, so as to provide the necessary raw material for the formulation of the general programme of action.

22. Those programmes of action should be developed in complementarity with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the Comprehensive Development Framework, and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

23. The following areas should be the main thrusts of the new programme of action for the least developed countries. First, only good governance would allow the least developed countries to strengthen their economic, social and environmental development; that concept would embrace an economic policy designed to give greater support to private investment and at the same time stimulate balanced economic growth, together with the participation of civil society in the decision-making process and a transparent and honest public administration. Second, special priority should be accorded to primary education, in particular the education of girls, with a view to developing human resources. Third, access to adequate health services, especially in the area of mother and child health, should be ensured as should access to drinking water. Fourth, the informal sector should be integrated into the various areas of activity; in particular, capacity-building and the training of human resources employed in that sector, microenterprises and microcredit should be considered priorities. Fifth, the funding of the programme of action should include measures allowing for an increase in financial resources linked to official development assistance for the least developed countries, better access for the products of the least

developed countries to northern markets should be ensured, local savings should be encouraged through decentralized financial institutions, especially in rural areas, and the tax system should be reformed with a view to expanding the tax base, partly through direct taxation on income and capital and partly through the introduction of indirect taxation methods.

24. **Mr. Snyder** (United States of America) said that his Government placed a high priority on assistance to the least developed countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development.

25. It hoped that the preparatory process and the Conference itself would serve not only as a forum for an exchange of ideas but would also produce concrete and tangible solutions. In that regard, the formulation of programmes of action for individual countries remained the most effective way to encourage the Governments of the least developed countries to identify problems and seek appropriate solutions to their economic and social problems. Sustainable development was a task that should not be placed solely on Governments; other participants and partners should be involved, including the private sector and civil society.

26. Although the work of the Conference secretariat in organizing the Conference was encouraging, he believed that there should be cooperation between the secretariat and all Member States, particularly the least developed countries and the European Union, which was hosting the Conference, in order to achieve greater transparency in the preparatory process. The participation of the private sector and of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process and in the Conference itself should be strongly encouraged, in order to ensure the greatest degree of completeness and to ensure that all points of view and resources were adequately represented.

27. The United States planned to work with the least developed countries to take advantage of the unprecedented political and economic possibilities that currently existed, and to consider in greater detail the special needs of those countries, so that all countries could benefit from the globalized economy. At the dawn of the new millennium, the opportunities for advancement, change and growth were unsurpassed. Both developed and developing countries must work to set aside their traditional differences of opinion and make a commitment to promote sustainable

development for the benefit of all parties. The Conference would provide a good occasion for the execution of those ideas.

28. **Mr. Al-Hadad** (Yemen) said that the technical preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries should be accompanied by political will and good faith, so that the least developed countries could emerge from the spiral of the social and economic problems they were confronting. Priorities must be defined: first and foremost, the eradication of all forms of poverty by an increase in official development assistance, which should be devoted to investments in basic infrastructure. In addition, it was important to facilitate access to global markets for the agricultural and industrial products of the least developed countries and to increase their share in the market. Furthermore, countries that were in the process of joining the World Trade Organization should be able to continue to enjoy the advantages they had been granted until such time as their economic situation improved. His delegation hoped that the programme of action to be adopted by the Conference would clearly define a strategy and modalities that would permit the least developed countries to resolve their economic and social problems. It also hoped that the industrialized countries, the United Nations and its various funds and agencies, and the international financial institutions would coordinate their efforts in order to bring about the necessary transformations that would allow the least developed countries no longer to be subjected to exclusion and marginalization.

29. **Mr. Lelong** (Haiti) welcomed the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 52/187, in which it had decided to convene the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2001 in order to assess the results of the Programme of Action during the 1990s and to consider and adopt measures which could effectively resolve the development problems of the least developed countries. His delegation welcomed the progress made in the preparations for the meeting. An intergovernmental preparatory committee and a high-level panel on the assessment of progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s had already been convened.

30. The Government of Haiti, recognizing the importance of preparations at the national level to ensure the success of the Conference, had established a

national preparatory committee which was open to civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

31. In the Programme of Action for the 1990s, the international community had committed itself to reversing the increasing decline in the socio-economic situation of the least developed countries. Regrettably, the commitments made had not been respected.

32. At the international level, globalization and the liberalization of trade, the spiralling decline in official development assistance (ODA) and the high rates of indebtedness of the least developed countries had been the major impediments to the realization of the objectives of the Programme of Action. The level of ODA received by those countries had been reduced by 22.6 per cent in the 1990s, while the number of such countries had increased from 42 to 48.

33. Official development assistance today accounted for 0.02 per cent of the total GDP of States members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a figure which was well below the targets set by the United Nations. Assistance to the least developed countries was at its lowest level in 25 years. The target of 0.15 per cent of the GDP of donor countries established in the Programme of Action was far from having been met; instead, it had decreased from 0.09 per cent in 1990 to 0.05 per cent in 1998.

34. At the national level, the development of the least developed countries had been slowed down largely by poor mobilization of domestic resources, an unprecedented decline in commodity prices and the failure of those countries to attract foreign direct investment, and sometimes by political conflict. Those countries had thus become dependent on foreign aid, which was in sharp decline. As a consequence, they found themselves marginalized in the international arena.

35. His Government, for its part, had undertaken to improve Haiti's economy despite the scarcity of resources at its disposal. An increase of 4 per cent in GDP had been recorded in 1998. Inflation had been reduced to 8.5 per cent after reaching 21 per cent in 1997. The main reason for that improvement was an increase in rice yields following agrarian reform.

36. While it welcomed the numerous initiatives for alleviating the indebtedness of poor countries, his

delegation was strongly in favour of expanding the Cologne (HIPC) initiative to include other countries. The conditions for admissibility should thus be reassessed. It was inappropriate to use the debt to export income ratio as a criterion, since on that basis, a country as poor as Haiti did not meet the criteria and could not benefit from alleviation of its debt on the pretext that it was not sufficiently indebted. Nevertheless, Haiti was required to maintain a debt-servicing level equivalent to 8 per cent of its export income. Other criteria — such as the relationship between the amount reimbursed and the amount spent on education and health — would provide a better indicator of the country's situation.

37. His delegation placed great hopes on the success of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the programme of action that would result. The stakes were high for the Governments of the least developed countries. The coming decade must not suffer the same fate as the two previous decades.

38. His delegation hoped that the discussions would lead to the finalization of a true global agenda containing proposals and commitments based on an in-depth study of the limitations of previous policies pursued at the national and international levels, as well as practical cooperation mechanisms which would ensure coherent action to promote economic and social development and to eradicate poverty in the least developed countries over the coming decade. A new approach to cooperation must therefore be adopted in order to create an enabling international environment, to encourage the least developed countries to pursue more effective development policies, and to obtain a firm commitment on the part of the international community to support the efforts of those countries with regard to human development. That commitment should include the strengthening of the production capacity and competitiveness of such countries, as well as improved access to the markets of developed countries for their goods.

39. It was to be hoped that the new programme of action which would result from the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries would be sufficiently flexible to enable it to be adapted to the numerous changes occurring at the international level, and to respond to the needs of the least developed countries over the coming decade.

40. Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said he was pleased to note that preparations for the Conference to be convened in Brussels were already well under way. SADC attached great importance to that Conference, which would give all parties an opportunity to examine the problems facing the least developed countries in the context of globalization. The first two Programmes of Action for the least developed countries had not lived up to their promises; the number of such countries had in fact increased, from 41 in 1990 to 48 today. The major causes of the worsening economic situation included the twin processes of globalization and trade liberalization which marginalized some of the least developed countries, the decline in ODA, the debt problem, the lack of investments, internal conflicts and natural disasters, as well as incidences of pandemics such as HIV/AIDS.

41. Globalization could be positive if its benefits were equitably shared among all participating countries. There was therefore a need to undertake measures to ensure the integration of the least developed countries in the world trading system. That could be attained, inter alia, through improved production of the goods and services of those countries and through unhindered markets for their goods. In that regard, the decision of the European Union to grant duty-free, quota-free access to their products should be welcomed. It was to be hoped that the Third Conference on the Least Developed Countries would closely examine the question of resource allocation and technical assistance to those countries. The average flow of ODA to developing countries was 0.25 per cent — a figure which was far below the agreed target of 0.7 per cent — and 0.05 per cent for the least developed countries compared to a target of 0.15 per cent. Some donor countries should be commended for meeting or even surpassing the agreed targets. The States members of SADC also welcomed the commitment of the international community to addressing the debt problem of developing countries through various relief measures. In that regard, the enhanced heavily indebted poor country initiative appeared most promising and it was to be hoped that it would be expanded to cover other countries. The question of foreign direct investments was related to the issue of resource flows. The trend for such flows to developing countries had generally been positive, but

the proportion received by the least developed countries in the 1990s had been a mere 1.4 per cent, compared to 3.6 per cent in the period from 1975 to 1982. Most of those countries had undertaken painful structural adjustment reforms in order to create a climate conducive to investments. Other measures were also under way. It was to be hoped that the Conference would be used to explore ways of attracting foreign direct investments to the least developed countries.

42. In the face of such a situation, international cooperation in the area of technology transfer was crucial to help the least developed countries to improve their productivity and competitiveness in the world economy. One of the major impediments to development was the persistence of conflicts in some countries in Africa, which caused refugee flows. That image of Africa had a negative impact on the continent's economic activities and discouraged potential investors. During the past 10 years, therefore, Africa had been taking conflict resolution very seriously.

43. Natural disasters were a further impediment to economic growth and sustainable development. The States affected lacked the capacity to respond to those problems. Recently, the SADC region had suffered from the El Niño phenomenon, which had brought floods followed by drought. Floods had also ravaged South Africa and Mozambique, causing considerable damage. The international community should strengthen the modalities for assisting developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, in order to mitigate the impact of such disasters.

44. Moreover, the least developed countries had been seriously affected by epidemics, particularly the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The problem had reached alarming proportions in some countries; it was therefore necessary to undertake urgent preventive measures and provide treatment, including affordable medicines.

45. With regard to preparations for the forthcoming Conference, the Secretary-General should appoint the Executive Secretary of the Conference and Special Coordinator for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked and Small Island Developing Countries to oversee the preparatory process as soon as possible and, in addition to the April 2001 meeting of the Preparatory Committee, one other session should be organized. He had learned that the resources allocated

for the Conference and its preparation were inadequate and hoped the Secretary-General would mobilize additional resources in order to ensure its success. The member countries of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) hoped the meeting would produce a new programme of action setting concrete, quantifiable and measurable objectives.

46. **Mr. Awesso (Togo)** said the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries to be held in Brussels in 2001, was especially important because the socio-economic situation of that category of countries had not improved. On the contrary, it had been exacerbated by the negative effects of globalization, which had accentuated the least developed countries' marginalization within the global economy. That reality was in sharp contrast to the objective of halving the number of persons living in poverty by 2015. The key to a successful Conference was good preparation and he welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the state of preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (A/55/222). He also welcomed the discussions of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Conference and the creation by the Secretary-General of the Conference of a high-level panel to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s.

47. With regard to preparations at the regional level, the outcome of meetings such as the meeting of African ministers of finance and planning should reinforce the preparatory process for the Conference. The support provided by the European Union and UNDP had facilitated the creation of national preparatory committees and the establishment of national programmes of action, which should propose concrete measures to combat poverty, as recommended by UNCTAD. In addition, the European Union and certain donors had pledged contributions for financing the Conference process.

48. The African countries, which included 33 of the 48 least developed countries, were committed to the success of the Brussels Conference. The 36th Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had recently adopted an important declaration calling on the international community to redouble its effort in the critical areas of debt cancellation, resource flows, capacity-building and infrastructural development with concrete programmes to be worked out in cooperation

with OAU and African regional organizations. The Summit participants had called on the creditor countries and multilateral financial institutions to provide real debt relief, including debt cancellation in favour of all least developed countries, complemented by increased capital flows, particularly official development assistance (ODA) and direct foreign investment. In calling on the international community to adopt concrete and effective measures on behalf of the least developed countries, the Heads of State and Government of OAU had undertaken to commit the funds released by debt cancellation to the fight for the eradication of poverty. That declaration by OAU, as well as the declaration adopted by the Havana South Summit and the Millennium Declaration, constituted valuable tools which should help to strengthen the preparatory process for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and ensure the success of the meeting itself.

49. **Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic)** said that globalization was not a new phenomenon but that institutional and policy changes were needed to humanize it. The free movement of capital must be matched with the free movement of labour and trade liberalization would proceed faster if developed countries removed quotas, duties and agricultural subsidies. The eradication of poverty and the integration of LDCs into the world economy must go hand-in-hand with concrete measures in the areas of ODA, trade, debt and direct foreign investment, with the cooperation of all stakeholders. The volume, quality and effectiveness of official development assistance should be improved and it should target areas that would have a positive effect on poverty eradication as well as promote accelerated growth and overall development. Foreign direct investment and technology transfer would also enhance the productive capacities of developing countries and increase their competitiveness. The external debt problem remained an obstacle to new investment and development, and additional resources must therefore be found to support economic transformation. Economic and social development was very important, in particular for the eradication of poverty and the provision of basic social services. Socio-economic conditions and education must also be improved, women must be mainstreamed into the development process and the fight against AIDS must also be intensified.

50. He welcomed the progress made in preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. That Conference was a system-wide undertaking in which UNCTAD had a key role to play with regard to activities at the global level and the review process. Coordination and cooperation at the country level must be reinforced by stressing partnerships. Like other least developed countries, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had participated actively in the preparation process and, by implementing the Programme of Action for the 1990s, had made very encouraging progress. Despite the financial crisis in Asia in 1997, the difficulties encountered had been overcome by drastic government measures such as budget reductions and credit control, which had enabled the country to maintain a growth rate of approximately 6 per cent. National development efforts must, however, be complemented by international support measures and the landlocked States needed greater international financial and technical support to overcome the negative effects of their geographical disadvantage.

51. Mr. dos Santos (Mozambique) attached great importance to preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which would provide an opportunity to discuss their situation and devise a comprehensive strategy to guarantee economic growth and sustainable development in the poor countries. The situation of the LDCs had deteriorated and their number was increasing. The Programme of Action adopted in Paris in 1990 had not been successful in generating the necessary support in the international community for the development needs of LDCs, which had been exacerbated by the effects of the globalization process. Globalization offered opportunities and risks but its benefits were not evenly shared while the costs were borne by all. The least developed countries were marginalized and excluded from the globalization process. They therefore challenged the international community to show a firm political will to manage that process and allow LDCs to integrate themselves into the global economy and share in its benefits so that globalization would become a positive force for all countries. That would be possible only through the globalization of development, in other words the effective integration of LDCs into the global economy. He welcomed the decision by the European Union to grant duty-free and quota-free access to LDC exports and urged the other developed countries to follow suit.

The LDCs must, on their part, improve domestic production capacity to become more competitive in the global market. That required adequate flows of foreign direct investment and technology transfer, but above all increased official development assistance for investments in non-productive areas such as education, health, clean water and basic infrastructure, which were fundamental for the eradication of poverty and the development of productive capacity. The efforts of LDCs to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development were severely hampered by the external debt burden; writing off that external debt would enable them to tackle the scourges of poverty and underdevelopment effectively.

52. The holding of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries was the starting-point for implementation of the outcomes of the Millennium Summit, in particular those related to LDCs. The Millennium Declaration had called on the industrialized countries to grant free access to the LDCs' exports, cancel all bilateral debt and provide more generous official development assistance.

53. Mr. Neral (Cambodia) noted with appreciation the efforts made by the international community to implement the Paris Programme of Action adopted at the preceding conference and aimed at promoting the development of the LDCs and improving their socio-economic situation. At the same time, it was disheartening that those countries had been unable to benefit from the globalization of the economy or to meet the goals of the Programme of Action, despite the considerable political and economic reforms that they had introduced. It was alarming that the number of LDCs had increased from 42 in 1990 to 48 in 2000. Globalization had placed the LDCs in a very challenging position, forcing them to adapt to an increasingly competitive international environment. The decline in ODA and the considerable increase in the external debt were other factors which impeded the development process for that group of countries.

54. As a group, the LDCs recognized that their problems of underdevelopment could not be resolved without the consistent support and effective cooperation of the international community. He therefore expressed gratitude to the European Union, Norway and the Holy See for the financial support they had provided for the preparatory process of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

55. Cambodia welcomed General Assembly resolution 52/187, which called for the convening of the Conference in 2001 and the initiative of the Secretary-General to appoint a high-level panel to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. The next session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee would hopefully contribute to a great extent to the success of the Conference, which would examine the question of opening up the multilateral trade system as an effective means to promote the development of the LDCs. The participants could also take decisive measures to achieve the objective of reducing poverty by half by 2015. The transfer of increased financial and technological resources was also urgently needed in order to help those countries integrate fully into the global economy.

56. Cambodia was not only a least developed country; it had also undergone decades of war and civil unrest. Currently at peace, it was resolved to promote the eradication of poverty, introducing structural reforms, transparency and good governance while becoming more integrated into the regional and global economy. With the assistance of the Asian Development Bank, it was preparing to launch its second socio-economic development plan for 2001-2005, which would focus on poverty reduction in the most affected regions. Nonetheless, because of its weak human resources would need continued foreign aid in order to carry that plan out.

57. Mr. Thakur (Nepal) said that it was very encouraging that the Conference had strong support from the LDCs' development partners, in particular the European Union and Norway, which had expressed their commitment to ensure its success. Poverty eradication was a subject of the highest priority, since nearly half the world's population lived on less than two dollars a day. Various studies had been carried out to evaluate the results of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s. The results had so far been disappointing. It was hoped that the next decade would be a decade of progress and prosperity.

58. The division of the world into rich and poor jeopardized world peace and security. Yet that divide had widened over the years, in particular owing to globalization and the development of information technologies. The LDCs were being increasingly marginalized. Their share of world trade had been just

0.4 per cent in 1998, although they represented 10 per cent of the world population. Furthermore, the number of countries in the LDC category had risen from 42 to 48 in the last two decades.

59. Undeniably, the LDCs could not meet the needs of their populations by themselves. The paucity of resources for development was among the most critical constraints they faced. While ODA, the traditional source of financing for development, had declined in the past decade, the situation had been further aggravated by the increasing burden of foreign debt servicing which was a major drain on their meagre resources.

60. In the current international environment, the LDCs were at a particular disadvantage because of the difficulties they encountered in gaining access to knowledge. A four-pronged approach should be considered to help those countries catch up with the rest of the world: duty-free and quota-free access for local products to the markets of developed countries; more substantial debt relief; considerably enhanced ODA to put in place development infrastructures; and promotion of direct foreign investment in the LDCs through incentives and investment protection mechanisms.

61. It was very encouraging that the General Assembly had adopted the objective of halving poverty by the year 2015. His delegation hoped that the high-level meeting on financing for development to be held in 2001 would take very seriously the multifaceted problems confronting LDCs and draw up a lasting solution.

62. Mr. Swe (Myanmar) said that the prime objective of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s had been to arrest the further deterioration in their socio-economic situation, to reactivate and accelerate growth and development and to set them on the path of sustained growth and development. Those commitments had not been kept, and the 48 LDCs were still confronted with poverty and marginalization. At the dawn of a new millennium, they had to face the new challenges of globalization and trade liberalization. The forthcoming Conference would, it was hoped, address the plight of the most vulnerable people, and its outcome would benefit all the least developed countries. Since the quality of the preparatory work was essential for the success of the Conference, his delegation fully supported the

recommendation of the first session of the Preparatory Committee calling for the Committee to hold an additional session in order to consider pending issues.

63. His delegation welcomed the United Nations Millennium Declaration in which the world's leaders, had undertaken to address the special needs of the least developed countries and called on the industrialized countries to take specific actions in the areas of market access, debt relief and ODA. However, it recognized that the LDCs bore the primary responsibility for their development and that the preparatory process at the country level was a key element in the preparation for the Conference. Myanmar had already prepared a draft national programme of action for the period from 2001 to 2010 addressing the different sectors of the economy with the ultimate aim of eradicating poverty. Myanmar was currently carrying out its urban and rural development programmes without foreign assistance. It could do so more effectively if it benefited from external support.

64. Mr. Huang Xueqi (China) said that, at the dawn of a new century, China welcomed the significant progress made in the fields of new technologies, globalization and trade liberalization, which had contributed to the socio-economic development of mankind. It was, however, regrettable that the LDCs were running the risk of marginalization because of the very same globalization, which was prejudicial to their socio-economic situation. The international community must urgently help those countries overcome the problem of poverty which was hindering their development.

65. His delegation hoped that the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries would offer the opportunity for those countries to express their political will and would reinvigorate the international community's interest in defining new objectives for international cooperation so as to ensure the sustainable development of those countries. China therefore welcomed the progress made in the preparations for the Conference at both the national and the regional and international levels.

66. Since the developed countries were the primary beneficiaries of globalization, it was their duty to assist the least developed countries to integrate themselves into the world economy. They must revise their current policies in order to draw up a practical plan of action which took into account the specific conditions of

those countries. Those countries must be assisted on the one hand by strengthening their development capacities and on the other hand by creating external conditions conducive to their development, by taking action in the fields of trade, ODA, foreign debt, technology transfer and investment.

67. As a developing country, China had to face serious problems such as poverty and economic backwardness. Nonetheless, it had in the past 10 years provided over \$2 billion in assistance to the LDCs as part of its multilateral and bilateral programmes. Furthermore, during the Chinese-African Cooperation Forum recently held in Beijing, it had announced that in the next two years it would contribute to reducing the debt of the least developed African countries through a contribution of \$1.2 billion.

68. Mr. Lukwiya (Uganda) said that the substantial levels of support promised by the international community at the second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Paris in 1990, had not materialized, although those countries had taken painful measures to effect the recommended economic reforms. Instead, the inexorable deterioration in their economic and social situation throughout the 90's had been aggravated by globalization.

69. Against that background, it was essential to reach agreement on a new and more feasible approach to development cooperation. The stakes at the next Conference were very high for the millions of people still languishing in poverty. It was therefore incumbent on the whole of the international community to give them new hope of survival. For that reason, Uganda attached great importance to the preparatory process leading up to the Conference and was determined to contribute to its success. The National Preparatory Committee, consisting of representatives of all sectors of activity, key ministries, civil society and non-governmental organizations, was finalizing an Action Programme for the Development of Uganda, covering the period 2001 to 2010.

70. Nevertheless, many of the development problems of the LDCs had been identified. A new deal designed to strengthen cooperation and achieve tangible progress should be negotiated at the third Conference. The new Programme of Action should therefore define a fresh approach to international cooperation, be action-oriented and aim to obtain faster results in areas of great concern to the LDCs, namely the inclusion of

those countries in the process of globalization, so that they could also share in the benefits it provided. The cancellation of debt was likewise a vital aspect, but it had to be backed up with the injection of additional resources to support economic transformation. Moreover the industrialized countries should, as agreed, devote 0.7 per cent of their GNP to official development assistance (ODA) for developing countries. At the same time, the quality and effectiveness of that type of aid should be enhanced. In order to improve the terms of trade of the LDCs, those countries' products should be ensured immediate duty-free and quota-free access to the developed countries' markets. Furthermore, foreign direct investment should be promoted so as to boost the LDCs' production capacities and create productive jobs. The new Programme of Action should also include the obligation to provide additional resources so as to attain the targets set in Agenda 21.

71. Peace, security and good governance were preconditions for attracting investment. The elimination of corruption and the fostering of a culture of transparency and accountability would contribute to a more effective use of foreign aid.

72. In view of the need to eradicate poverty, priority should be given to social and human development. Special attention ought to be paid to functional education and basic health care. A multidimensional approach should also be adopted to fight the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other deadly diseases.

73. The forthcoming Conference was an undertaking involving the whole United Nations system. Its follow-up would require the cooperation of all United Nations bodies, other multilateral development institutions and civil society. The United Nations had a central role to play in that endeavour. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as a focal point, must continue to play a key part. In addition, the office of the Special Coordinator for LDCs, land-locked LDCs and small island developing States should be strengthened substantially.

74. Mr. Musambachime (Zambia) said that the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries should provide an opportunity to alleviate the plight of the most vulnerable peoples through the adoption of a new deal. In the 1990s, the LDCs had experienced continuing poverty and marginalization, while the processes of globalization and liberalization

coupled with advances in science and technology had increased the developed countries' prosperity. If all countries were to derive maximum benefit from the globalization process, genuine collaboration would have to be established between the LDCs and their development partners, particularly the developed countries.

75. The LDCs, including Zambia, had been forced to implement far-reaching structural and macroeconomic policies but were still facing high levels of poverty. That situation was due to various internal and external factors. At the domestic level, those countries had difficulty managing macroeconomic policies. In addition, political and civil strife sometimes sent refugees flooding into neighbouring countries. Furthermore, there were virtually no institutional arrangements to respond to the challenges of globalization and liberalization.

76. At the world level, the continuous decline in ODA flows and high levels of debt of the LDCs impeded sustained economic growth. Those countries still faced unfavourable terms of trade which heightened the dangers of marginalization, because the benefits of globalization bypassed them. Those countries were struggling to obtain access to the industrialized countries' markets and assistance from their partners was urgently required on account of the weakness of their financial, technical and productive capacities. If those countries were to become integrated in the world economy, they would have to take specific steps in cooperation with their development partners to remove the constraints linked to supply and demand that affected their trade performance.

77. The LDCs would not be able to overcome the challenges facing them without outside assistance. The support of the international community was of critical importance in order to speed up the growth of their economies. To that end, developed countries must devote 0.15 per cent of their GNP to ODA for the least developed countries, in accordance with the target set, and introduce measures to lighten the debt burden so that the resulting savings could be used to finance development programmes.

78. The high levels of debt and debt service were still a drain on the limited resources of the LDCs, despite the various debt-relief measures taken by the donor community during the previous decade. The Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative was by far the most

important measure adopted by the international community to address the question of the poorest countries' debt. However welcome that Initiative, it was regrettable that its implementation was taking longer than expected. There was therefore an urgent need to relax criteria for admissibility, so as to allow speedy access to the Initiative, in order that LDCs might receive debt relief.

79. The LDCs should be adequately prepared for the Conference in 2001 and, in that respect, he supported the recommendation made at the first session of the Preparatory Committee that an additional Committee session be convened in order to consider outstanding issues. The aim in respect of LDCs should be to reduce poverty, stimulate economic growth and promote sustainable development in those countries.

Agenda item 99: Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (continued) (A/C.2/55/L.18)

Draft resolution concerning the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), including the establishment of the World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication (A/C.2/55/L.18)

80. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced the draft resolution. Since the Decade had commenced in 1997, efforts to reduce poverty had yielded disappointing results. The purpose of the draft resolution was to revive the process, in view of the various useful contributions made on the question. The text mapped out a strategy for the implementation of the Decade, including the establishment of a World Solidarity Fund for Poverty Eradication, and requested the Secretary-General to undertake the necessary consultations on the modalities and operations of the Fund. He hoped that the Committee would adopt the text by consensus.

Other matters

81. **The Chairman** announced that, after consultations, he had appointed Mr. Zare Zare (Islamic Republic of Iran) as facilitator for the draft resolution entitled "Strengthening the coordination of the mechanisms on the Commission for Science and Technology for Development: promoting complementarity of activities in the area of new and innovative technologies within the United Nations

system" (A/C.2/55/L.3). He would facilitate informal consultations on that text.

82. **Mr. Amaziane** (Morocco), Rapporteur, speaking as the representative of Morocco, said this his country was joining the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.7/Rev.1 (Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources).

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
20 November 2000

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 31st meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 31 October 2000 at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Ms. Barrington (Vice-Chairman) (Ireland)
later: Mr. Niculescu (Chairman) (Romania)

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In the absence of Mr. Niculescu (Romania, Ms. Barrington (Ireland), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 102: Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (continued)
(A/55/222, A/55/257-S/2000/766 and A/55/459)

1. **Mr. Kondo (Japan)** said that the draft annotated outline distributed at the recent session of the Trade and Development Board formed a sound basis for the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee's deliberations on the new programme of action to be adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. It was to be hoped that the working draft would be available in sufficient time for members of the Preparatory Committee to consider it before their January meeting.

2. The new programme of action should advocate genuine ownership by the least developed countries and partnership among all relevant development actors in the international community. In order to ensure its consistency with national programmes of action, countries should submit their programmes of action in a timely manner; however, every effort should be made to avoid imposing excessive burdens on the governments of least developed countries and duplicating the work of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other programming instruments for national development. Coordination among all actors at the country level would be essential. Existing development policy coordination mechanisms, such as the round tables of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and relevant groups of the World Bank, must also provide input. The new programme of action must take a more focused approach and set clear and realistic priorities without attempting to satisfy all parties on all issues.

3. **Mr. Shihab (Maldives)** said that, despite the previous two Programmes of Action, the situation of the least developed countries was rapidly deteriorating as a result of deeper indebtedness, increased poverty and disease, globalization and marginalization and declining flows of official development assistance and foreign direct investment. The Conference must produce a new programme of action which addressed those developmental problems and fostered a spirit of

true partnership between the least developed countries and the developed countries and international financial organizations.

4. The list of least developed countries was growing and now stood at 48 countries, with 3 more eligible for inclusion. Efforts to modify those statistics by expelling countries from the list or measuring their economic performance and vulnerability by inaccurate and insensitive criteria would only aggravate their problems. Maldives had been earmarked for graduation from the list of least developed countries in 2000 and yet it remained vulnerable, its economic growth having been depressed by factors beyond its control. The current criteria for graduation should be more attuned to the narrow-based, small and vulnerable island economies, while taking into account the numerous differences among individual small island States. In view of the inconsistent recommendations by the Committee for Development Policy regarding the graduation of certain small island developing States, the current criteria must be urgently refined. That issue should be considered by the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee and the forthcoming Conference.

5. **Mr. Rinchen (Bhutan)** expressed his delegation's full support for the statement made by the representative of Bangladesh, highlighting issues of concern to the least developed countries. His delegation also noted the encouraging statements made by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union, Norway and others, which demonstrated their political will to fulfil their commitments to the least developed countries. A vital aspect of the preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries must be a review of the outcome of the previous Conference on that subject and the implementation of its Programme of Action. Indeed, the failure to implement that Programme of Action, coupled with the sharp decrease in assistance levels was undermining the confidence of the least developed countries in the upcoming Conference.

6. His Government was in the process of preparing for the forthcoming Conference at both the national and regional levels. It was pursuing a people-centred development policy and welfare programmes for all sectors of society, particularly the poor, which promoted equal opportunities for all; however, it could not maintain those efforts without assistance. In

conclusion, he called for renewed partnership between the least developed and developed countries on the basis of human solidarity and shared responsibilities.

7. *Mr. Niculescu (Romania) took the Chair.*

Agenda item 97: Training and research (A/55/31)

8. **Mr. van Ginkel** (Rector, United Nations University) welcomed the report of the Secretary-General entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century" (A/54/2000) and the United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2), which the United Nations University fully supported. The United Nations University (UNU) now consisted of its Tokyo centre and a global network of 12 research and training centres and programmes and had a budget of \$36 million. Since knowledge was a critical component of the digital global economy, it was attempting to adapt its programmes, priorities and methods of work to that new context, as reflected in its strategic Plan 2000, entitled "Advancing Knowledge for Human Security and Development". The University was gradually clustering its ongoing projects and initiatives within two broad thematic areas: peace and governance, which focused on governance and pre-conflict and post-conflict issues, and environment and sustainable development, which focused on development, science and technology and the environment, and was making every effort to enhance its connections with the United Nations system. In recent years, the University had increased its inputs to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its participation in the activities and work of the United Nations. In a number of major public addresses, particularly at meetings of the World Bank and the Security Council, the Secretary-General had explicitly relied on the University's research findings regarding conflict prevention and poverty eradication strategies.

9. In January, UNU had held a conference on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary to take stock of international trends and showcase new ideas and fresh thinking of relevance to the United Nations. Papers prepared for that conference had served as an intellectual resource base for the preparation of the Secretary-General's report and were available on the University's web site. In his 1997 reform plan, the Secretary-General had stressed the paramount importance of knowledge to the successful functioning of the United Nations in the twenty-first century and

specifically called on the University to tap knowledge, analyses and expertise from around the world in the main areas of the Organization's work. A meeting of United Nations research agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system with research capacity, organized jointly by the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations University, had culminated in the launching of an annual Geneva Research and Policy Dialogue to Strengthen Inter-agency Cooperation and Cooperation between Suppliers and Users of Research. In that same vein, he had participated in the first Inter-Academy Council in Tokyo, designed to determine how academies of science and other institutions around the world could support the United Nations system in its work.

10. The University also continued to play a significant role in the follow-up and implementation of United Nations global conferences, including the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", in preparation for which it had organized a women's leadership research and training course in early June and an agenda-setting workshop on gender issues the previous week, and the World Water Forum for which it was developing, together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) a United Nations World Water Development Report. It had been designated as a partner to the Government of Japan in the preparations for the third World Water Forum, to be held in 2003, and, under the leadership of UNESCO, was contributing to the follow-up of the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education. UNU was organizing joint workshops with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on innovation and social sciences, to be held later in the year, and another on research management, to be held in February 2001. It was also placing increasing emphasis on transmitting knowledge to decision makers in the private sector and civil society. It had carried out a major research initiative on Kosovo, examining the deeply troubling precedent of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) circumventing the United Nations Security Council to launch an offensive war.

11. The University was particularly concerned with issues of economic and environmental governance. In July 1999, together with other United Nations bodies, it

had organized an international conference on interlinkages among multilateral environmental agreements and had carried out a study on the economic and social impact of El Niño in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), WTO, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the United States National Center for Atmospheric Research.

12. The University was anxious to contribute to the United Nations Year of Dialogue Among Civilizations in 2001. Already, it had addressed the themes of global capitalism and sustainable development; science, knowledge and ethics; international society, justice and equity; and religion, gender and culture. In the coming months, it would organize, in conjunction with UNESCO, a series of workshops on, respectively, education, science, ethics and media or communication in the context of civilizational dialogue, culminating in a major conference, to be held in Tokyo and Kyoto in June 2001.

13. It was also forging links with research institutions around the world that could bring "additionality" to its work and that of the United Nations. It was also establishing contacts with research groups, international organizations and industries. In that connection, the University's Food and Nutrition Network had strengthened institutes in Chile, Guatemala, India and Thailand and initiated a new programme on sub-Saharan Africa. The University had also developed networks in the areas of natural resource management in Africa and sustainable land use in dry areas and had launched a Global Development Network. It would capitalize on advances in information and communications technology to enhance the effectiveness of its networking activities, develop even broader partnerships and disseminate its work more widely to academic communities in various parts of the world. The University was also investing in virtual university technologies and was working with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and some Norwegian institutions to develop modular interactive course material based on the Global Environment Outlook 2000.

14. A key priority of the Strategic Plan was to strengthen the University's capacity-building activities, designed to benefit academic institutions in developing countries and assist the career development of scholars and scientists. To that end, the University provided over 120 fellowships to young scholars every year in a

wide range of fields and engaged in integrated capacity-building linked to research or to development projects — for example, water management in Mexico or software technology in developing countries — often in cooperation with UNDP.

15. In May and June, the University had organized a second six-week course for postgraduate students and professionals in international fields. By 2001, it would be offering seven Global Seminars designed to increase understanding and awareness of global issues and the work of the United Nations among the student population of various countries. As part of its effort to promote postgraduate education, a comprehensive external evaluation of the University's capacity-building work was being carried out and would be reviewed by its Council in 2001.

16. Mr. Kataria (India) said that the United Nations University could provide significant inputs to the deliberations of United Nations organs through the creation of knowledge networks. His Government had consistently attached importance to the research and University's capacity-building work and had contributed generously to its Endowment Fund and its World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER), based in Helsinki. Eminent and widely respected Indian scholars had served on the University's Governing Council and the governing boards of its research and training centres, and numerous Indian institutions and scientists had participated in its activities. The Indian Institutes of Technology, the country's premier institutions in the field of engineering, computers and bio-technology, were also partners of UNU.

17. He expressed appreciation for the University's contributions to United Nations deliberations in recent years, in particular, to the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee, particularly its panel discussion of May 2000 on information technology and economic growth and development.

18. His delegation welcomed the two thematic areas of the University's Strategic Plan but cautioned that the mandate of the intergovernmental processes and the priorities of developing countries must be taken into account. In the field of development, a topic of major relevance to Member States would be the application of science for development. The University should redouble its efforts to disseminate its research findings, particularly those relating to science and technology

and information technology. His Government attached great importance to strengthening capacity-building through training and supported the Strategic Plan's call for broadening those activities. In that context, national expertise should be utilized more fully and programmes should be more demand-driven in order to meet developing countries' needs.

19. **Mr. Ji Fusheng** (China) noted with appreciation that, in recent years, the activities of the United Nations University had been more closely linked with those of other United Nations organs, and had provided helpful services to the Secretary-General and Member States, inter alia, by helping to increase understanding of the serious problems facing developing countries and the causes thereof. Within the context of the University's seminars, courses and educational programmes to strengthen capacity-building in developing countries, he had attended courses of the UNU International Institute for Software Technology (UNU/IIST), which were conducted in countries marginalized by the globalization process. Those courses had given many young professors and graduate students access to the newest ideas in computer science which, in his view, would help to bridge the digital divide.

20. According to the report of its Governing Council, the University had received very little financial support from the United Nations system; it was time that that situation was rectified. The United Nations system and Member States must demonstrate the political will to implement the provisions of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council of 2000.

21. **Mr. Weichel** (Canada) reaffirmed his Government's support for the activities undertaken by the United Nations University and recalled that four years ago Canada had provided funding to establish the International Network on Water, Environment and Health at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. The network operated as a project-based, revenue-generating network using experts seconded from a wide range of organizations to form customized, multidisciplinary project teams. Since its inception, the network had completed a variety of projects around the world including an integrated, self-sustaining, locally-managed system to collect, store, monitor, transport and apply sewage biosolids as an agricultural fertilizer; and an integrated coastal zone management regime,

and had helped improve water management and capacity-building in developing countries.

22. **Mr. Al-Hadid** (Jordan) welcomed the University's new strategic plan and noted that the research carried out by the University in the areas of peace and governance and environment and sustainable development had increased understanding of those issues. By collaborating with institutions around the world the University's work acquired a truly global perspective. Its work in analysing the complex processes that affected the global environment and in trying to develop a more coordinated approach to environmental policy was a good example of that perspective.

23. Jordan was proud to host the UNU International Leadership Academy, established in 1994, which had carried out a number of valuable activities, including a course on female leadership.

24. The University contributed to capacity-building in the Arab world through the International Network on Water, Environment and Health, which aimed to develop the human resources needed to improve management of water in developing countries. In view of the importance of the Network, Her Royal Highness Princess Rania had accepted the Presidency of its Consultative Council. In September 2000, a workshop had been held in the Jordanian city of Aqaba on the management of industrial waste, and a further workshop, on the planning and management of water resources, would be held in Amman in February 2001.

25. **Mr. Kumamaru** (Japan) said that his Government highly valued Mr. van Ginkel's leadership in promoting more focused research and organizing a series of public forums and it also appreciated the University's increasingly active participation in the work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations forums. It welcomed the adoption of the University's "Strategic Plan 2000: Advancing Knowledge for Human Security and Development" and looked forward to seeing the University take an even more active role in the future, particularly in connection with the global conferences to be held in the next few years.

26. The issue of improving the University's interaction and communication with other parts of the United Nations system was crucial because the University needed to keep in close touch with the concerns and requirements of the United Nations

system as a whole so that it could conduct activities useful to the Organization, and therefore to Member States. His delegation welcomed the improved cooperation with many parts of the United Nations, and wished to encourage the Rector to intensify his efforts in that area. However, he stressed that such interaction and communication needed to be two-way. He urged the University to exploit more fully information and communication technology, so as to enhance its ability to connect and interact with the rest of the United Nations system.

27. In the area of management and administration, he welcomed the progress made in response to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit regarding efficiency, cost-effectiveness, financial transparency and accountability, and wished to encourage the Rector to make further efforts to follow up on the report. Finally, he stressed the importance of enlisting more countries as financial contributors to the University's work.

Agenda item 95: Environment and sustainable development

(g) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (A/55/162-S/2000/715)

28. Mr. Szyszko (Poland), speaking in his capacity as President of the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, noting that the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the Convention would be taking place in two weeks' time in the Hague, said that in the three years since the Kyoto Conference no technical decisions had yet been reached, and so the objective set by the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol could not be fulfilled. However, some bridges had been built between the developed and developing countries.

29. Following the last round of negotiations and preparatory meetings, considerable progress had been made, notably on the subject of land use, land use change and forestry. All Parties had agreed that carbon sinking was as important as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. There seemed to be general agreement that the management of land and natural resources might serve as a model for a multifunctional economy which might encourage carbon sinking and permit rational protection and utilization of natural resources. In order to preserve credibility, there could be no further delay

in reaching decisions and ensuring implementation of the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol.

30. Not enough was being done to draw people's attention to the danger of global warming. It was important to lobby citizens who were aware of the problems, and to convince negotiators of the need for rapid and effective action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There was no need for the developing countries to repeat the errors which the developed countries had committed. Consensus-building required that assistance be rendered to developing countries. One way to do that would be to have an efficient system of finance which enabled developing countries to protect their natural resources and to develop according to the principle of sustainable development. In the interest of the entire world it was essential for the developed countries to help the developing ones and for the latter to reciprocate.

31. Mr. Zammit Cutajar (Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that in the negotiating process for the Sixth Conference of the Parties there was a tendency to emphasize the Kyoto Protocol and the need to make it ratifiable. Although it had been ratified by 30 countries, not one Annex I country had yet done so because they were awaiting the outcome of the Sixth Conference regarding the rules for implementation. Ratifiability of the Kyoto Protocol would be only one element of success at the Sixth Conference. The other was that developing country delegations should leave it feeling significantly better off in terms of support for their efforts to address climate change and to adapt and shift their economies on to climate-friendly paths.

32. A balance had to be struck between securing the ratifiability of the Kyoto Protocol and continuing and intensifying support for developing countries in their efforts to contribute. That balance was reflected in the substantive agenda of the Sixth Conference of the parties, which included strengthening the capacity of developing countries to respond to the adverse effects of climate change, the impact of response measures on, for example, oil-exporting countries which would see their market share affected, the classical issue of finance for the transfer of technology and capacity-building, and the specific concerns of least developed countries.

33. The clean development mechanism was in essence an economic incentive for developing countries to be more active in their climate change strategy. The issue of the ratifiability of the Kyoto Protocol involved trade-offs between its various aspects. It was an attempt to move developed countries towards fundamental changes in long-term patterns of production and consumption, and away from the sometimes profligate use of fossil fuels towards energy efficiency, renewable energy and transport measures. But those were difficult measures to take, and had economic and political costs, so the Kyoto Protocol also opened up easier opportunities for action through domestic measures, including the use of sinks, and offshore opportunities.

34. One way of looking at the current negotiation from the point of view of the developed countries was that it was a trade-off between measures that were difficult to take and those that were easier. The offshore mechanisms were emission trading, the joint implementation mechanism and the clean development mechanism, all of which enabled Annex I parties to obtain part of their target offshore either through the exchange of part of their quotas or through investment in projects. The clean development mechanism also aimed at promoting sustainable development and assisting in adaptation. In all discussions on mechanisms, a balance was being sought between credibility and efficiency.

35. The issue of credibility involved how the emissions to be reduced were to be measured and the way in which an emitter was to be held accountable. Work on that was proceeding very well, and possibly not receiving sufficient recognition. The issue also involved the definition of sinks, and what was to be admitted under that heading in the first and subsequent commitment periods. Thirdly, it involved mechanisms, and whether there were any limits to their use and conditions regarding the eligibility of projects under one or other of the project-based mechanisms: for example, whether sinks were eligible for the clean development mechanism. There was also the rather technical issue of the solidity of project baselines against which reductions under the joint implementation regime and the clean development mechanism would be measured and the standards for accrediting auditors to verify them. Finally, there was the question of compliance, and whether there were consequences if a country did not fulfil its targets.

36. The Sixth Conference of the Parties was a political deadline, and it was vitally important that it be a success. Time was needed for laws to be passed to set up national institutions to make the Kyoto Protocol work and for the private sector to make the necessary investments in cleaner technologies. There was therefore a premium on action being taken now. Beyond the Sixth Conference lay the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and after that a new scientific assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to be completed in the third quarter of 2001, and new negotiations between the Parties towards targets for the second commitment period, 2013-2017. There would also be the question of engaging the developing countries in an appropriate form, guided by the principles of the Convention. Finally, there was the question of linkages and synergy among the different environmental and sustainable development instruments.

37. **Mr. Annedu** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group of 77 and China had doubts as to whether the expectations of the Sixth Conference of the Parties would be realized, since there were huge numbers of complex and contentious issues which had yet to be addressed. The Group's priority issues, which included financing of development and transfer of technology, as well as providing capacity-building, must be dealt with in concrete terms and at the same pace as the issues of interest to developed countries before any meaningful success could be achieved. Mere rhetoric would no longer suffice. That was also true of article 4.7 of the Convention, implementation of which would take fully into account economic and social development and poverty eradication as the overriding priorities of developing country Parties.

38. The Group of 77 saw the lack of progress in the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by the developed countries as a vivid manifestation of their unwillingness to fulfil their commitments under the Convention. Thus, it cautioned against any attempt to open debates on enhancing the contribution of the developing countries at the Conference of the Parties. Rather, the Conference must simplify the complexities and contentious issues raised by the reports on mechanisms, land use change and forests; that would require the utmost transparency and the full participation of all parties.

39. The Group supported the need for research on new and renewable forms of energy, in order to keep all options open. It urged caution, however, concerning the call for the creation of an intergovernmental task force to develop guidelines for decision makers on reforming energy prices which did not include other factors of production. It saw no reason to prolong the existence of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development and the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and Energy for Development beyond the ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. All crucial issues relating to energy and sustainable development should be addressed in 2002 at the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21.

40. Finally, the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly should be taken into account when setting dates for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the various environmental conventions, so as to ensure adequate representation of developing countries, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/445.

41. **Mr. Kolby** (Norway) said that the small island developing States and the least developed countries made practically no contributions to greenhouse gas emissions, yet they were likely to suffer the most as a result of climate change and sea level rise. The particular vulnerability of those countries underlined the urgency of dealing effectively with climate change and its adverse effects.

42. Industrialized countries must lead the way in demonstrating their intentions to fulfil their obligations under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. In that regard, deciding on guidelines and rules for the use of the flexible mechanisms under the Protocol was extremely important. His delegation agreed that the mechanisms should be supplemental to domestic action, but saw no basis for defining "supplemental" in quantitative terms. In its view, such a restrictive definition had serious political implications; it would further alter the effectiveness of the mechanisms and would require additional bureaucracy.

43. The clean development mechanism was of vital importance as a tool for emissions reductions in developing countries as well as a vehicle for foreign direct investment and technology transfer. By contributing to sustainable development while helping the developed countries meet their commitments under

the Kyoto Protocol, the mechanism served as a new and promising tool in the area of development policy.

44. Norway's participation in the pilot phase of activities implemented jointly had taught it that there were many challenges, but also many opportunities for fruitful cooperation between developing and developed countries. It was important to reach a comprehensive decision at the forthcoming Conference of the Parties, including a strategy for capacity-building, as it was vital for all parties to create an enabling environment to ensure more climate-friendly development. Barriers to technology transfer must also be identified and analysed.

45. The parties must reach sufficient agreement at the forthcoming Conference to allow the ratification process to go forward. Agreement on rules and guidelines for the Kyoto mechanisms was vital, along with agreement on a credible compliance system, capacity-building and technology transfer. However, the parties must not let their desire for the perfect solution prevent them from achieving an adequate one.

46. **Ms. Corado-Cuevas** (Guatemala) said that, with 2.8 million hectares of broadleaf forest, Guatemala was an oxygen-producing country with enormous potential to become a net carbon sink through its forest cover. Her Government attached great importance to climate change because of the impact that such change would have on its people and economy. It was a party to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and had signed the Kyoto Protocol. It had completed national studies on inventories, vulnerability and mitigation, which would provide the basis for the first National Communication to be presented at the sixth Conference of Parties.

47. Concerning issues to be discussed at the Conference, her delegation believed that no agro-forestry system should be excluded from negotiations on carbon fixation. Guatemala would not enter into any voluntary commitments until it had evaluated its own needs and priorities. Her delegation would also welcome clarification about the transition phase from joint implementation to the clean development mechanism. Finally, it was important to recognize the service that developing countries which generated oxygen were providing to reduce the detrimental effects of greenhouse gases produced in industrialized countries.

48. **Mr. Punj** (India) said that his Government was committed to protecting the environment while addressing the development needs and aspirations of developing countries. Immediate measures were needed to provide developing countries with the necessary financial and technological resources to enable them to meet their commitments under the Convention. His delegation expressed deep concern at the tendency to look on the Kyoto mechanisms as vehicles for investment and technology transfer and to ignore the commitments made for provision of new and additional financial resources and transfer of technology on concessional terms.

49. India attached great importance to the forthcoming Conference of the Parties and would participate actively. It hoped that agreement would be reached on principles, rules and modalities for the three mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol. In the view of his delegation, most emissions reductions by the developed countries should be achieved through domestic action; reductions through the mechanisms should be supplemental thereto. Moreover, the choice of areas and technologies for the clean development mechanism should be left to the recipient Governments so that their sustainable development priorities could be fully respected. Project baselines were another area of critical importance.

50. His delegation firmly rejected attempt to link ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to voluntary commitments of the developing countries. It called for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and participation in accordance with common but differentiated responsibilities.

51. **Ms. Seth** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that small island developing States had the most to lose from sea-level rise and the other predicted manifestations of global warming. Since all the evidence pointed to the fact that temperatures could go higher than previously predicted if emissions were not curtailed, action was needed by the global community in general and by the industrialized countries in particular, since they were the largest emitters of greenhouse gases.

52. The CARICOM countries noted with concern that, although more than 150 countries had signed the Convention, the only ones to ratify it were the developing countries, which had no legally-binding

commitment to reduce greenhouse gases. To date, not one industrialized country had ratified the Kyoto Protocol. The small island developing States, which would be among the first to suffer from the adverse effects of climate change, could only ask their partners in the industrialized world to give proof of their commitment by taking immediate action. The Caribbean Community had been doing its part by assessing and identifying its options for adaptation under a project funded by the Global Environment Facility. In addition, many of its members would present their initial national communications at the forthcoming Conference of the Parties. The environmental integrity of the Kyoto Protocol must be maintained if real and measurable reductions in emissions were to be achieved.

53. **Mr. Koech** (Kenya) said that, while the Kyoto Protocol provided a general blueprint for action, many of its provisions, especially those relating to emissions trading, the clean development mechanism and joint implementation, were yet to be addressed. Accordingly, the Sixth Conference of the Parties should finalize the Buenos Aires Plan of Action as well as the outstanding elements of the Kyoto Protocol. Moreover, such action would be in line with the Millennium Declaration. His delegation hoped, in that regard, that the 10-year review of the implementation of Agenda 21 would yield positive results.

54. Recognizing the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities, he underscored the need to develop a meaningful global response to the threat posed by global warming. Since massive investments were required for the production and adaptation of new and renewable forms of energy, closer international cooperation was required. He called on the developed countries to assist the developing countries to initiate and implement capacity-building programmes. He also urged Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to make every effort to ensure that it entered into force by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and to start reducing their required greenhouse gas emissions.

55. **Mr. O'Brien** (Australia) said that his Government had signalled its strong support for effective action to combat global climate change by committing almost \$A 1 billion over five years to implementing a range of domestic greenhouse gas reduction programmes. On a per capita basis, Australia was spending more money on greenhouse gas reduction

efforts than any other developed nation. To address greenhouse gas issues, Australia had developed a National Greenhouse Strategy, which covered a broad range of key sectors including energy, transport, industry, waste and agriculture. He briefly set out some of the measures that his Government was putting in place in the areas of renewable energy, energy efficiency, greenhouse gas abatement, industry involvement, carbon accounting and emissions trading.

56. Australia's national circumstances were unique. Its demography, geography, resource base, trade profile, economic structure and the energy intensity of its exports required it to develop a unique strategy for reducing its emissions. It had taken measures to promote cutting-edge renewable energy technology and improve energy efficiency in Australian industry. His Government was also helping other countries to do likewise. Indeed, since its inception, the International Greenhouse Partnerships Office had facilitated nine projects in five countries, totalling investments in excess of \$A 120 million and resulting in greenhouse gas emissions reduction of approximately 1.3 million tonnes per annum. Australia remained a strong advocate of equitable, realistic, cost-effective and environmentally effective solutions. Strong economics were compatible with better environmental outcomes.

57. **Ms. Rühl Burzi** (Observer for Switzerland) said that the decisions taken at the Sixth Conference would have an immediate impact on all involved in the fight against climate change. The Conference must reach an understanding on how to transfer environmentally-sound technologies to developing countries and provide capacity-building with respect to the fight against climate change. Decisions must also be taken on issues relating to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change. With respect to the Kyoto Protocol, the Conference must set out modalities with regard to joint implementation, the clean development mechanism and emissions trading. Decisions must also be made on the use of carbon dioxide sinks. Moreover, in order to ensure the credibility of the Protocol, the Sixth Conference must adopt a strong regime requiring compliance with commitments including, if necessary, assistance to the Parties and sanctions for those who fail to meet their commitments.

58. She hoped that the Parties would have the political will to reach a consensus which was satisfactory to all and that the industrialized countries would achieve the objective of reducing their emissions

by 5.2 per cent within the commitment period 2008-2012 without resorting to subterfuge. They would in turn be able to invite the developing countries to participate in efforts to limit and reduce their greenhouse gases.

59. Once consensus was reached, the next step would be to implement the Convention and Protocol at the national level in the industrialized countries. Switzerland had promulgated a law requiring that carbon dioxide emissions be reduced by 10 per cent by 2010 compared with 1990 levels. It was thus already implementing the Kyoto Protocol even before ratifying it.

60. **Mr. Popov** (Belarus) said that efforts to combat climate change must be carried out on both a national and a global scale. Overcoming those problems could lead to solutions to some of the problems of sustainable social and economic development as well. Reliable forecasts of climate change could facilitate adaptation and mitigation of the consequences. In implementation of the Convention, Belarus had begun an inventory of greenhouse gas sources and sinks using the methodology of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It had long been a part of the international climate monitoring system, but it had serious concerns about the low level of international support for national efforts in that area. Without an increase in such support, his country would find it difficult to make an impact in its efforts to prevent climate change.

61. His delegation welcomed the growing numbers of parties to the Kyoto Protocol, and the cooperation being provided by the World Bank in reducing emissions. In an interdependent world, problems of climate change must be solved by the international community as a whole.

62. **Mr. Stanczyk** (Poland) said that climate change constituted a major challenge for the international community. Poland was one of the few countries that had been able to meet its commitments under the Convention; it had not only stabilized its greenhouse gas emissions in 2000 but had also reduced them by more than 25 per cent. It was equally determined to implement the commitments agreed upon under the Kyoto Protocol.

63. Poland was aware that meeting the Kyoto Protocol targets would be a difficult and arduous process and would require many sacrifices in terms of

economic growth. It firmly believed that the environmental integrity of the Protocol must be preserved. One of the advantages of the Protocol was that it provided a framework for the application of market mechanisms. Emissions trading and joint implementation should therefore not be burdened by additional charges and international taxation, since that would be inconsistent with the very nature of those mechanisms which were supposed to assist Annex I parties in fulfilling their commitments in the most cost-efficient manner. It was extremely important to meet the most vital concerns of the countries which undertook legally binding commitments.

64. **Mr. Donoso** (Chile) expressed deep concern at the results of recent scientific research pointing to an unprecedented increase in the size of the hole in the ozone layer above the southern hemisphere. The continued existence and persistence of that phenomenon had raised fears that in the near future the problem could have grave and far-reaching consequences. His country was a party to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and all the Amendments thereto. Thus far, it was the only country to have subscribed to the Beijing amendment.

65. He called for the identification of the countries that were most vulnerable to the consequences of the depletion of the ozone layer with a view to granting them a special financial status with respect to the problem. States parties should promptly ratify the Montreal and Beijing amendments; combat the illegal traffic in substances that depleted the ozone layer; enact national legislation to prohibit the importation, manufacture and trade in those substances; and promote greater consumer awareness of the issue. They also introduce special seals to distinguish products that did not damage the ozone layer; promote safe alternative technologies and allocate resources for activities to monitor ultraviolet rays and to study the impact on ecosystems and human health of the problem under discussion.

66. **Mr. Ainchil** (Argentina) said that while the discussions on specific aspects of the Kyoto Protocol were very important, they should not divert the international community's attention from the main objective, namely, stabilizing the concentration of greenhouse gas emissions at a level that prevented anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

His delegation had noted with great concern the increase in greenhouse emissions in some industrialized countries; the decline in such emissions in the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom was a very positive sign however.

67. In his delegation's view, appropriate conditions should be created for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol while at the same time ensuring the transfer of financial and technological resources so that developing countries could adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change. To that end, both the developed and developing countries had to work together to achieve balanced agreements that facilitated a reduction in emissions and sustainable development within the context of common but differentiated responsibilities. He expressed the hope that the Sixth Conference of the Parties would be able to reach agreements in key areas.

68. **Mr. Ji Fusheng** (China) said that the principle of common but differentiated responsibility must be observed when addressing global climate change issues. The developed countries were the main source of greenhouse gas emissions; they should take the lead in reducing such emissions. The Kyoto Protocol sought to specify quantified emission reduction obligations for developed countries while providing extraterritorial emission reduction mechanisms. However, the latter were complementary to the domestic reduction efforts of developed countries. Moreover, the Protocol in no way affected the obligations with respect to technology transfer and financial assistance that the developed countries had assumed under the Convention. They should therefore take steps as soon as possible to honour their obligations to provide financial assistance and transfer technology to developing countries.

69. The European Union had clearly expressed its wish for the Protocol to come into force before 2002. His delegation hoped that various countries would respect the fundamental principles set out in the Protocol so as to conclude the negotiations and bring the Protocol into force at an early date.

70. The Sixth Conference of the Parties should aim at solving existing issues instead of raising new ones. He hoped that the Conference would be able to achieve results that were satisfactory to all parties and make substantial progress on issues of concern to developing countries, such as technology development and transfer and capacity-building with a view to establishing

necessary institutional safeguards and effectively enhancing the capacity of developing countries to cope with climate change. The international community should strictly abide by the principles and the spirit of the Convention. Developed countries and developing countries should fulfil their respective obligations in accordance with the principles of the Convention and establish partnerships to effectively cooperate in protecting the global climate for present and future generations.

71. **Mr. Zammit Cutajar** (Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that he was encouraged by the statements made and commitments to seek constructive outcomes. He also appreciated the statements calling for support for national action, especially in developing countries. Responding to the point raised by the representative of Nigeria on the need for coordination of conference schedules and calendars in order to avoid overlaps and conflicts, he noted that Member States would have to adopt coherent positions on that matter in the different fora concerned.

Agenda item 94: Sustainable development and international economic cooperation (*continued*)

72. **The Chairman** announced that Canada, Cyprus, Fiji, Finland, Hungary, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Sweden should be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.4 entitled "Integration of the economies in transition into the world economy" and that Belgium, Bolivia, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Kenya, Luxembourg and South Africa should be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.5 entitled "Status of preparation for the International Year of Mountains, 2002".

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.



General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
27 November 2000

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 32nd meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 8 November 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Niculescu (Romania)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 93: Sectoral policy questions (continued)
(A/C.2/55/L.22)

(a) Industrial development cooperation (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.22

1. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.22, entitled "Industrial development cooperation" and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item 95: Environment and sustainable development (continued) (A/C.2/55/L.20, L.21 and L.23)

(b) Convention on Biological Diversity (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.20

2. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced resolution A/C.2/55/L.20, entitled "Convention on Biological Diversity". He drew attention, in particular, to paragraph 7, whereby the developed countries were urged to facilitate the transfer of environmentally sound biotechnology for effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol, and paragraph 8, which called for the proclamation of 22 May as the International Day for Biological Diversity.

(d) Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.21

3. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.21, entitled "Further implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States". He drew particular attention to paragraphs 3 and 5, and to paragraph 6, which urged all relevant organizations to finalize, as a matter of urgency, the work on the development of a vulnerability index for small island developing States.

(g) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.23

4. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.23, entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" and drew attention to paragraphs 2, 6 and 7.

Agenda item 97: Training and research (continued)
(A/C.2/55/L.24)

Draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.24

5. **Mr. Kawaguchi** (Japan) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.24, entitled "United Nations University", on behalf of the co-sponsors listed in the document and also Fiji, Georgia, Germany, Haiti, Iceland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Latvia, Malta, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey and Zambia. He drew particular attention to paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11, saying that the United Nations University was even more relevant now than when it had been established 25 years earlier. His Government would continue to provide active support to the University in the hope that it would maintain its distinctive identity.

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (A/55/3 and A/55/419)

6. **Mr. Civili** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs), introducing the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/55/3), said that it was no longer relevant to speak of the Council's revitalization but rather that the focus should now be on its strengthening. The emphasis placed, at the Millennium Summit, on poverty eradication and ensuring that globalization benefited all, had given the Council new and much greater recognition. In that connection, he acknowledged the effective leadership of the Council President, Mr. Wibisono, both in breaking new ground and consolidating the achievements of the past few years. Examples of ground-breaking initiatives had been the Council's meeting with the President of the Security Council on the implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and its emergency meeting to deal with the devastating floods in Mozambique. The Council had consolidated its role as a forum for meetings between representatives of the United Nations and the

international financial and trade institutions by its special high-level meeting in April with the Bretton Woods institutions; the one-day policy dialogue at the opening of the substantive session in July, had built on the outcome of the meeting and had focused on the digital divide and the role of information and communications technology (ICT) in development.

7. Discussions at the high-level segment, which had been devoted to the theme "Development of international cooperation in the twenty-first century: the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy" had increased awareness of the potential of information and communication technology for development. The ministerial declaration adopted at the end of the segment contained an action plan to harness information and communication technology for development and improve developing countries' access to ICT. All regions and key development actors, including the private sector, had been involved in the preparations for the substantive session and in the high-level segment itself. The result had been genuine consensus-building and sustained and participatory follow-up. In addition, following the Millennium Summit, the Council had called for the establishment of a task force to increase the digital opportunities of the developing countries and help them formulate national ICT for development programmes. The Secretary-General was currently holding consultations on the composition, terms of reference and working methods of the task force.

8. The work of the Council's coordination segment had led to significant advances in the coordination of the follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s. The Council had invited its functional commissions to ensure that intergovernmental reviews of the conferences and summits resulted in mutually reinforcing outcomes. The Council would consider the question again in 2001. The segment had also given impetus to the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

9. At its operational activities segment, the Council had expressed concern at the insufficiency of core funding for operational activities for development and made proposals to reverse that trend. It had also identified a number of issues for the next triennial

policy review for operational activities for development, including a review of the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), impact evaluations of operational activities and cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions. The humanitarian affairs segment had emphasized the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance and the role of technology in mitigating the impact of human emergencies and the related displacements of persons. In the general segment, the Council had considered a whole range of reports aimed at providing some common direction to the work of the Council's system, adopted a number of resolutions and established the United Nations Forum on Forests as a subsidiary body.

10. One highly significant aspect of the Council's work was its growing role as a forum for representatives of governments, the United Nations system and civil society to discuss operational and policy issues crucial to development. The Council and its Bureau were preparing for a spring meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions. The theme of its high-level segment in 2001 would be "The role of the United Nations system in supporting the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development"; its coordination segment would focus on the role of the United Nations in the area of knowledge and technology through partnership with relevant stakeholders. In conclusion, he believed that the Council could further improve its methods of work by phasing segments and meetings with a view to maximizing participation in them as well as its own capacity for timely responses, and further sharpening the focus of the general segment, with support from the Secretariat.

11. **Mr. Doutriaux** (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, and, in addition, Iceland, said that the European Union attached great importance to the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council and welcomed the progress achieved in strengthening the Council's coordinating role, although much remained to be done in that regard. Stronger ties with the Bretton Woods institutions were vital; the European Union therefore welcomed the Council's increased cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions through, inter alia, the now traditional special high-

level meeting held in April. It hoped that the financing for development process would further strengthen that trend and also that the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization would participate actively in the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

12. The substantive session of July had also been a success; the European Union welcomed, in particular, the extensive participation of the private sector and the innovations introduced by the President of the Council, such as the information technology exhibit and thematic breakfasts, which had paved the way for additional partnerships. The ministerial declaration and the proposal to establish an ICT task force testified to a genuine determination to achieve concrete results were praiseworthy. The European Union hoped that the outcome of the next high-level segment devoted to Africa would be equally tangible.

13. He expressed the Union's satisfaction at the coordination segment, although some overall guidelines should have been established with regard to the follow-up to the major United Nations conferences. Fortunately, the agreed conclusions assured the continuation of dialogue in that area, which should be informed by an awareness of the close linkage between the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the major conferences and summits and the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The European Union had been pleased with the operational activities for development segment and the adoption of two resolutions by consensus. It hoped that the next triennial policy review of operational activities for development would take place in a constructive atmosphere. The failure to adopt agreed conclusions in the humanitarian segment was regrettable, particularly since the victims of natural disasters and populations displacements needed protection and assistance. The many organizational changes introduced, including panels, were encouraging, however.

14. The European Union was dissatisfied with certain aspects of the organization of the most recent substantive session, particularly delays in the distribution and/or translation of documents and the lack of interpretation during negotiations. It called on the Secretariat and the Bureau to ensure that such problems did not recur.

15. **Mr. Ansedu (Nigeria)**, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that they attached great

importance to the revitalization of the Council and welcomed the proposal made at the high-level segment, to create an ICT task force. Access to and use of the Internet would be invaluable to developing countries in combating developmental problems, particularly poverty. While the other segments of the substantive session had also been impressive, it was regrettable that no agreed conclusions had been reached in the humanitarian affairs segment.

16. The Group of 77 and China appreciated the themes selected for the coordination and high-level segments of 2001 and was pleased that the need to augment core resources for operational activities for development was now acknowledged. While it was understandable that agreed conclusions could not be reached on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development, the Group of 77 and China hoped for a more positive outcome later on. In conclusion, he thanked the President of the Council for the unique improvements he had made in the work of the Council, particularly with regard to the strengthening of the ties between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

17. **Mr. Liu Jingtao (China)** welcomed the Council's implementation of reform measures leading to its revitalization and increased efficiency. In particular, he welcomed the recent discussions on the role of information technology in helping the developing countries integrate in the world economy. He expressed appreciation to the President of the Council and the Bureau for their creative innovations and said that consolidation of the Council's achievements should be a priority task.

18. It was incumbent on Member States to curb the decrease in support for development and promote the development goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. His delegation attached great importance to participation by non-governmental organizations in national follow-up to the major global conferences and summits.

19. Indicators were a useful means of gauging progress in the implementation of the major global conferences; however, United Nations agencies should harmonize their approach so that Member States would not have to submit different sets of statistics to different agencies. The agencies should also help build Member States' capacities to collect and analyse statistics. In that connection, his delegation supported

the agencies' current practice of making specific requests for indicators on the basis of the programme of action of the conference or summit concerned.

20. **Mr. Mazhukhou** (Belarus) noted the growing role of the Council as a forum for meetings between representatives of the United Nations and the international financial and trade institutions, as well as specialized agencies, to enhance the dialogue on development, and he referred in that connection to the Council's recent special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions.

21. There were a number of issues he wished to highlight in connection with the Council's future work. Firstly, creation of a favourable internal and external environment for development should remain the main goal of the dialogue. Secondly, financing for development and the new round of the World Trade Organization multilateral negotiations should be among the priority issues for future dialogue with the heads of the financial and trade and economic organizations. That, however, did not preclude consideration of other questions linked to the achievement of greater coordination and mutual complementarity of the aims of global, regional and national policies and practices in resolving, with the participation of the United Nations, the economic, financial, trade and other problems of development, and especially the functioning of the international trading and financial system in conditions of information and communication integration. In that context, Belarus supported the conclusion contained in the consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (E/2000/85) that there appeared to be a need to move towards a more detailed analysis of the impact of globalization and of trade and finance in the specific area addressed by the functional commissions. In the view of Belarus it was also an issue to be dealt with by the regional commissions.

22. The regional aspects of managing the processes of globalization would become increasingly important, including in the work of the Council. Belarus welcomed the themes selected for the high-level and coordination segments of the substantive session in 2001.

23. The recent meeting devoted to the fight against hunger and the provision of food security, organized by the Council, with the executive heads of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the

International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme had been a good example of the new partnership between the agencies of the United Nations system and Government and other international partners to achieve the aims set out in the Millennium Declaration.

24. His delegation supported the continued diversification of cooperation between the Council, the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO, UNCTAD, the regional commissions and the development banks. Such cooperation could form part of the preparations for the international intergovernmental high-level event in 2001 devoted to financing for development. It was also extremely important for consensus to be reached on an international development strategy for the first decade of the new millennium.

25. The triennial review of operational activities for development should emphasize the importance of observing the principles of universality, neutrality and a multilateral approach, ensuring high-quality services and effectiveness of programme activity on the basis of a guaranteed minimum of basic resources and greater predictability of additional resources, as well as an increasing share of co-financed projects and programmes developed by Governments of interested countries and their partners.

26. Finally, in the context of strengthening relations between the main organs of the United Nations, special attention should be given to the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding integrated examination by the General Assembly, in plenary session, of the annual reports of the Economic and Social Council, which would be presented by the President of the Council (E/2000/67), and the proposals of a number of Governments and representatives of civil society regarding the strengthening of links and cooperation between that Council and the Security Council.

27. **Mr. Seki** (Japan) said that the decision regarding the establishment of an information, communication and technology task force within the United Nations represented a great leap forward and he hoped that the task force would adequately coordinate the efforts being made within the United Nations system to bridge the digital divide and to bring about a world in which everyone would benefit from digital opportunity.

28. With regard to the coordination segment, he said that, while it was a pity that agreement had not been reached on concrete measures to improve the way in

which review meetings on the implementation of major United Nations conferences and summits of the 1990s were conducted, headway had been made in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the follow-up to those conferences and summits, and it was to be hoped that the issue would continue to be discussed and that tangible progress would be made at the substantive session of the Council in 2001.

29. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution on the International Year of Volunteers in 2001; it also welcomed the adoption by the Council, at its resumed session, of the draft resolution on the establishment of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

30. **Mr. Reshetniak** (Ukraine) welcomed the growing cooperation between the Economic and Social Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, as reflected in the special high-level meeting held in April. His delegation also welcomed the outcome of the substantive session of the Council held in July, particularly its high-level segment on the role of information technology in the context of a knowledge-based global economy, which confirmed the Council's ability to identify and consider issues of key importance to economic growth and human development on a global scale. His delegation supported the basic conclusions of the high-level segment, as contained in the ministerial declaration, particularly the stress on the need for effective and meaningful collaborative efforts, involving Governments, multilateral institutions and the private sector, aimed at enhancing the impact of ICT in promoting sustainable development in developing countries and economies in transition as well as facilitating their integration into the global economy. Nonetheless, a more concrete and result-oriented outcome of the high-level segment would have been preferable to one of a general nature.

31. His delegation supported the agreed conclusions of the coordination segment, which would provide guidance to the United Nations system on ensuring an effective and comprehensive review of the progress achieved in follow-up to the major global conferences and summits. He commended the work of the general segment on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's functional and regional commissions and its subsidiary bodies, and of economic assistance of the international community and the United Nations system to States affected by Security Council sanctions regimes. At the same time, however, there was a need to rationalize the agenda of the general segment, and

for continued improvement of the Council's methods of work.

Announcement concerning sponsorship of draft resolutions

32. **The Chairman** said that Bulgaria, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia wished to become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.19.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.